



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission & Department

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

For Adaptive Reuse/Redevelopment of the Torrence-Lytle School Property

13900 Holbrooks Road

Huntersville, North Carolina 28078



Figure 1: Historic 1937 building in center

Responses Due: May 15, 2026 by 5:00 p.m.

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I. Introduction

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (Commission) is requesting proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of the Historic Torrence-Lytle School complex. The property is designated as a local Historic Landmark and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Torrence-Lytle School is located at 13900 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville, NC, further identified as Mecklenburg County Tax Parcel ID #01909306. The complex is located on 3.614 acres and consists of four historic buildings:

- Building A: 1937 original school building of 7 classrooms
- Building B: 1952 addition, consisting of 8 classrooms
- Building C: 1957 addition, consisting of 12 classrooms
- Building D: 1952 cafeteria

See Figure 2, Location Map.

II. Commission Goals and Vision

The purpose of the Commission is to ensure the preservation and adaptive reuse of property and structures that have been designated as local historic landmarks. For this RFP, the goal of the Commission is the preservation and redevelopment of the Torrence-Lytle School property in a manner that will preserve the historic character of the school and enhance the Pottstown neighborhood.

The Commission will give preference to proposals that preserve all four historic buildings.

The economic incentives provided by local historic landmark designation and the National Register of Historic Places can assist a private investor in restoration of the property. **(Attachment 1)**

III. Historical Background

The North Carolina Legislature passed legislation in 1913 that enabled counties to issue bonds to build high schools for African American children. It was not until 1923 that the City of Charlotte opened its first high school for African American children, Second Ward High School. In 1936, the County approved the construction of four rural high schools for black children, Pineville Colored High School, Plato Price High School, J.H. Gunn High School, and the Huntersville Colored School (Torrence-Lytle High School).

The Huntersville Colored School, later named Torrence-Lytle High School, opened

in 1937. At that time, it was a "union school" housing grades 1-11. It had seven rooms that housed three elementary school teachers, two high school teachers, Principal Isaac T. Graham, and 181 pupils. From its opening in 1937 to its closing in 1966, Isaac T. Graham was the school's principal.

In the fall of 1952, the school expanded its physical space with the addition of a cafeteria and eight additional classrooms. In 1953 the name of the school was changed from Huntersville Colored School to Torrence-Lytle High School. The name change honored two men who had been important in establishing the Huntersville Colored School: Isaiah Dale "Ike" Torrence and Franklin Lytle.

In 1957 twelve new classrooms, a science laboratory, a home economics department, a gymnasium and an agricultural building were added to the school campus. Torrence-Lytle is located in the south end of Huntersville, in an area historically known as Pottstown. Pottstown is named for Ortho Potts, a brick mason and prominent member of the community. Torrence-Lytle was the only high school for African-Americans in northern Mecklenburg County.

IV. Building and Site Information



Figure 2. Location Map

Property Details

Address: 13900 Holbrooks Road, Huntersville, NC 28078

Parcel ID: 01909306

Parcel Acreage: 3.614ac

Current Owner: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission

Zoning: Neighborhood Residential (NR)

Permitted Uses: Reference the Town of Huntersville Zoning Ordinance.

Approximate Square Footage: Building A – 10,522 sf, Building B – 9,438 sf, Building C – 9,938 sf, Building D – 13,536 sf

Stories: Building A - 1 story, Building B - 2 story, Building C - 3 story, Building D - 1 story

Condition

Critical Repair: In January 2025 the Commission reviewed and approved plans for roof repair and associated structural improvements for Building A. The Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) was issued February 2025 with work completed August 2025.

Abatement: Asbestos and lead abatement were performed in 2017 for all four buildings. Electronic copies of these reports are available.

V. Development Conditions and Information

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission is seeking a viable adaptive reuse for the buildings and the associated land parcel.

1. The Commission will require the history of the school and community to be celebrated through interpretive means such as signage, exhibits, etc. as part of the redevelopment plan.
2. For a project to qualify for State and Federal Historic Tax Credits, all four of the existing historic buildings must be preserved.
3. To be eligible for Federal and State Historic Income Tax Credits, building and site alterations will need to conform with the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines, and be approved by the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office. **(Attachment 2)**
4. Infill on the site would be allowed but should not significantly diminish the historic character of the property.
5. The property could be subdivided.

6. While the Commission will consider projects that include the demolition of one or more of the historic buildings, the 1937 Building A must be preserved and restored, and preservation and reuse of all historic buildings would be preferred.
7. Development proposals shall be required to comply with all applicable local, county, and state land development/building regulations.
8. Proposals should contain a community engagement strategy.
9. Once sold, deed covenants and the property's status as a designated historic landmark will ensure that the historic character of the property is preserved.
10. The Huntersville 2040 Community Plan may be helpful in forming a development proposal. **(Attachment 3)**
11. The following initiatives should be referenced in the RFP submittals:

Historic Pottstown Community Preservation Plan - In January 2025, the Town of Huntersville in collaboration with the Pottstown neighborhood began a series of public meetings for the Historic Pottstown Community Preservation Plan led by consulting firm Neighboring Concepts. **(Attachment 4)**

Pottstown Community Survey - In 2023, Mecklenburg County staff began a series of community meetings in Pottstown culminating in a survey, to gather feedback on their vision for the Torrence Lytle site which focused on desired compatible uses and methods to promote the history of the community. **(Appendix A)**

12. The Commission Staff will conduct three Pre-Proposal site visits during the Proposal Submission Period:

- March 25, 2026, 1:30 PM– 4:00 PM
- April 10, 2026, 1:30 PM – 4:00 PM
- April 16, 2026, 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Attendance to at least one site visit is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged.

VI. Required Proposal Content

1. Introduction

- a. Introduce the respondent and team members.
- b. Discuss your interest in purchasing and redeveloping the property.
- c. Briefly describe the benefits of the proposed project to the Pottstown community and to the larger community.

2. Rehabilitation and Development Concept

- a. Proposals should include a concept plan which clearly shows the anticipated development of the property. The plan should emphasize building additions or deletions (if any) and plans for future improvements to the site. Sketches and renderings should be included.
- b. Describe how retaining the historic fabric and adding modern building systems will be addressed.
- c. Describe how the project would ensure the long-term preservation of the historic elements of the property.
- d. Discuss how the project would benefit the Pottstown Community, and how the history of the historic school community could be shared through this project.

3. Development Schedule

- a. A detailed schedule of intended development activities shall be included.
- b. If the restoration/development plan is to be done in phases, there shall be a clear indication of which items are included in each phase. The approximate timing for each development phase shall be indicated and whether the phasing is sequential or overlapping. When certain assumptions are made regarding local and national economic conditions and market strength, qualifying statements may be helpful.
- c. The schedule should recognize the time involved in finalizing the development agreements, receiving project entitlements, designing the project, financing the project, commencing construction, and completing construction. Respondents should also include any necessary due diligence and outreach activities and timeframe as part of the overall project timeline.

4. Developer Qualifications (Please respond to the following as applicable).
 - a. Describe any similar projects undertaken by the respondent and team members, including the rehabilitation scope, financial structure, and management of the development process.
 - b. Discuss any specific experience with historic preservation projects and with meeting the Secretary of Interior's Standards in particular.
 - c. Describe any experience with identifying and securing target tenants.
 - d. Demonstrate any ability to operate and maintain commercial real estate projects once completed, including sustaining occupancy and addressing ongoing operational needs.
 - e. Indicate sufficient staff and consultant resources to meet the project objectives. Include the architect(s), planning team, structural engineer, contractor, and other critical consultants that are proposed.
5. Financial Capacity
 - a. Describe your financial capacity to finance the adaptive reuse of the Torrence-Lytle School property.
 - b. Describe the current relationship with lenders and ability to obtain necessary financing for the project.
6. Acquisition Options
 - a. Cash sale - Indicate the exact amount offered for the property.
 - b. Partnership agreement - Providing payment to the Commission for the purchase over a short time period (3-5 years). Indicate the exact amount to be paid at closing and payment schedule and dollar amounts.
7. Deal Structure
 - a. Project Feasibility - Please discuss resources to guarantee the completion of construction of the proposed development, including past performance history and current financial capability in executing similar projects in size and scope.
 - b. Please discuss the financing strategy for the development. (Please note, if selected, the Respondent will be required to provide additional evidence of its ability to guarantee the full completion of construction, including any cost overruns or delays.)

8. Acceptance of Historic Preservation Limitation.
 - a. The developer shall acknowledge acceptance of protective covenants or other appropriate legal instruments and design review authority by the Commission, including prevention of demolition of any portions of Building A, including demolition by neglect.
 - b. A protective covenant agreement will be recorded at the Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds and will run in perpetuity with the deed to the property, thus protecting the historic resource for future generations.
 - c. After purchase, the Commission will not allow the subdividing of the property without prior written consent of the Commission.
9. Minority/Women/Business Enterprises (MWBE)
 - a. Describe how your project could meet Mecklenburg County's goals for MWBE participation.
<https://mecknc.widencollective.com/portals/m3vzodwo/OfficeofEconomicDevelopmentBDIGuidesEffectiveJuly2022>.

VII. Proposal Evaluation Process and Criteria

The officers of the Historic Landmarks Commission and County staff will evaluate all proposals for completeness, compliance with the submission requirements described above, and the criteria enumerated in this section. Proposals will then be ranked. The respondent(s) with the highest ranked proposal(s) will be asked to present their plans to the Pottstown community in an open meeting arraigned by the Commission Staff.

Having taken into account the Community's comments, the respondent will make a presentation of their proposal to the Historic Landmarks Commission in an open meeting. Proposals at this stage will be evaluated based on the criteria described below:

1. **Relevant experience and qualifications** – Respondents will be assessed on their track record and ability to develop projects with similar project elements. The Commission will also evaluate any successful experiences executing and developing public-private ventures.
2. **Consistency with public policy** - The extent to which the proposed development addresses the RFP's Historic Preservation requirements for the property, and the applicable planning documents adopted by the Town of Huntersville.
3. **Risk factor** - The degree to which the proposed development is realistic and capable of being implemented immediately.

4. **Feasibility and financing** - The extent to which market and financial feasibility are proven.
5. **Property acquisition** - The reasonableness of the specific monetary proposal to acquire the approximately 3.614 acres of property and structures being offered.
6. **Property development Plan** - Respondents will be evaluated on the feasibility of their overall development plan. Plans should ensure that the property maintains its character, value, and integrity over time.

The full Commission will select the winning proposal but may delegate some discussion and/or negotiations to the Commission's Officers and/or an ad hoc committee. The Commission intends to evaluate proposals based on information from the proposals, additional information submitted to the Commission, and from presentations and discussions with the Commission, the Officers and/or an ad hoc committee.

The Commission reserves the right, at any time during this process, to request additional or supporting information in addition to the Respondent's original submission.

The Commission reserves the right, at any time, and at its sole discretion and without liability, to accept or reject any proposal.

At any time in this process, the Commission reserves the right to exclude any Respondents that fail to comply with the written submission or interview requirements of this RFP.

The RFP does not commit the County to pay any cost incurred in the submission of proposals or in making necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

Legislation may be adopted or become effective after issuance of this RFP or during the RFP period that could impact a developer and its potential proposal for development. In this regard, each potential developer should consult its own legal counsel and other consultant(s) for the applicability or non-applicability of any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that may affect or impact a potential developer's decision to prepare a proposal, submit a proposal, or if selected to enter into negotiations with and potential contract(s) with the Commission.

VIII. Sale

After the process above is completed, the Commission may select a proposal, negotiate the terms, and go under contract with the offeror. If the offeror cannot fulfill their proposal, the Commission may select another proposal.

1. Schedule of Events

The following chart shows the schedule of events associated with the Request for Proposals.

DATE	Time (EST)	Task	Instructions
3/11/2026	N/A	RFP distribution begins	N/A
3/25/2026	1:30 PM - 4:00 PM	1 st Pre-proposal site visit	Location: Torrence-Lytle Campus 13900 Holbrooks Rd, Huntersville
4/10/2026	1:30 PM - 4:00 PM	2 nd Pre-proposal site visit	
4/16/2026	9:00 AM - 11:30 AM	3 rd Pre-proposal site visit	
4/24/2026	Before 5:00 PM	Final request for clarification by applicants due	Email: historiclandmarkscommission@mecknc.gov
5/15/2026	Before 5:00 PM	RFP submissions deadline The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission will not accept proposals received after the submission deadline.	Email: historiclandmarkscommission@mecknc.gov OR Deliver to: HLC Offices 2100 Randolph Rd Charlotte NC 28207
TBD	TBD	Meetings/Presentations If desired by Mecklenburg County and the Historic Landmarks Commission, selected offerors will be contacted and scheduled.	TBD

Mecklenburg County and the Historic Landmarks Commission reserve the right to adjust this schedule as deemed necessary.

IX. Submission Requirements and Inquiries

Proposals can be submitted by email: HL@MeckNC.gov Electronic proposals, and printed material may also be delivered to the Commission at:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission
2100 Randolph Road
Charlotte NC 28207

Concurrent with the proposal submittal, applicant must schedule and attend a meeting with HLC Staff by email to: HL@MeckNC.gov

Any questions or requests for clarification shall be submitted to: HL@MeckNC.gov

All responses to questions and requests for clarification will be distributed to all teams that have requested RFP packages. We will make every effort to communicate to all teams any substantive information that emerges from discussions or visits. We will also use every possible means to treat all teams equally and fairly in any conversations and site visits.

To ensure fair consideration for respondents and to maintain equal access to information, we request that you do not contact anyone other than Commission Staff. Any attempts to contact other Commission representatives can result in the disqualification from the RFP process. **For all questions, contact Commission Staff members Stewart Gray or John Howard at 980-314-7660 or at HL@MeckNC.gov**

Respondents will be notified by the Commission of any change in the specifications contained in this RFP.

Any changes or additions to the RFP information will be emailed to each respondent who has submitted a proposal. Oral answers will not be authoritative.

X. General Policies, Terms, and Conditions

The Commission Staff will conduct two Pre-Proposal site visits during the Proposal Submission Period. Attendance is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged.

RFP responses will become public record and will be subject to public disclosure. However, North Carolina General Statutes Sections 132-1.2 and 66-152 provide a method of protecting some documents from public disclosure. If the developer/respondent follows procedures prescribed by those statutes and designates a document "confidential" or "trade secret," the Commission will withhold the document from public disclosure to the extent that is entitled or required to do so by applicant after selection.

This RFP does not represent any commitment or offer by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission to enter into an agreement with a respondent or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. The finalist shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any official or employee of Mecklenburg County, or the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission for the purpose of influencing consideration or a response to this RFP. Interested parties are directed not to contact any member of the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners or the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission concerning this project or in response to this RFP.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission reserves the right to reject any and all responses received with respect to this RFP, to waive informalities and minor irregularities and to cancel the RFP at any time prior to entering into a formal agreement. The Commission reserves the right to make reasonable requests for additional information or clarification of information provided in the response without changing the terms of the RFP.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission affirmatively works to encourage utilization of minority-owned and women-owned business enterprises. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission provides equal opportunity for all and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin or disability.

XI. Resources

Attachment 1: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/secretarys-standards-rehabilitation.htm>

Attachment 2: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/irs-information.htm>

Attachment 3: <https://www.huntersville.org/2619/2040-Community-Plan-Long-RangeComprehens>

Attachment 4: <https://huntersville.org/3310/Pottstown-Community-Preservation-Plan>

Appendix A: Pottstown Community Survey

Appendix A

Voice of Pottstown Community Survey Results & Executive Summary

1 - Introduction

As part of Mecklenburg County’s engagement efforts with the Pottstown community, County staff conducted a survey in partnership with the Pottstown Leaders Group. The survey was open for responses from January through March of 2024 and received a total of 50 completed responses (82 total survey attempts/partially completed surveys).

At a community meeting on April 27, 2024, survey results were shared with approximately 60 community members who provided feedback on results and were able to comment further as they wished. This executive summary presents key data points from the survey with contextual information provided by community members where appropriate.

Most survey respondents (75%) live in Pottstown. Of the remaining 25%, 10% live within Huntersville. More than half (54%) identify as a former student or staff member, or a family member or friend of a former student or staff member (Figure 1).

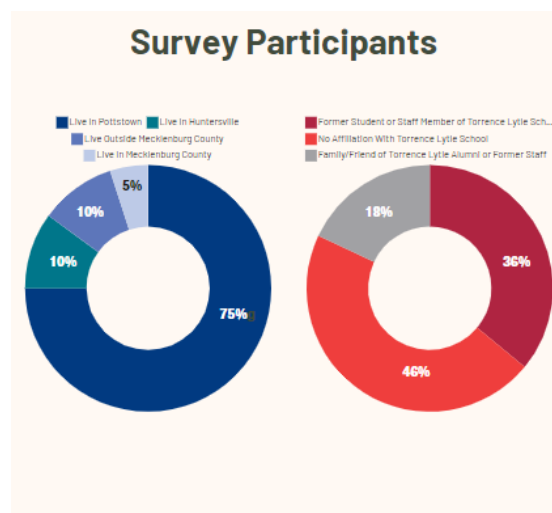


Figure 1

2 - Historic Preservation

Overall, there was strong support for historic preservation within the community, with 75% of respondents indicating that they believe historic preservation to be a worthwhile goal (Figure 2).

One resident commented, “It’s our history. If we don’t preserve it, it’s saying our community isn’t worthwhile.” However, residents also expressed that economic development is important as well and should be balanced with preservation priorities.

Do you believe historic preservation is a worthwhile goal?

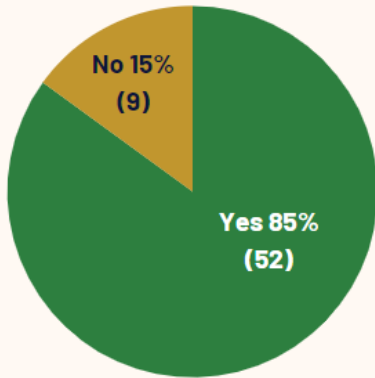


Figure 2

As far as the community’s priorities for preservation are concerned, both survey results and discussion at the April meeting indicated strong support for historically significant landmarks including The Little School, the David B. Waymer Center, and the Torrence-Lytle School (Figure 3). Although the survey considered each of these buildings separately, meeting attendees asserted that they see these structures holistically – they are all part of one complex and can’t be separated out. Although the Archives & Artifacts category received fewer votes on the survey, once County staff clarified the purpose of this proposed usage – to house items related to community history that would be free and available to community members – meeting attendees expressed strong support.



Figure 3

3 - Priorities for Adaptive Reuse

Respondents were asked to rank potential adaptive reuses for existing historic buildings. These proposals fell into the following categories: Community Services, Education, Health & Wellness, Retail, Employment and Housing.

Broadly, the community is moderately supportive of most proposed categories at a high level (Figure 4). However, there is notably less support for any proposal from the Housing category than for others. Several meeting attendees expressed support for upgrading existing housing rather than building new stock. Others expressed concerns related to gentrification and displacement, traffic, crime and noise.



Figure 4

3a – Community Services

As indicated above, the community expressed strong support for Archival Space, as well as for Community Event Space (Figure 5). Several residents mentioned the need for a local historian to staff the proposed Archival Space.



Fig. 5

3b – Education

Significant support for vocational education was present amongst survey respondents, with less enthusiasm for other educational institutions (Figure 6).

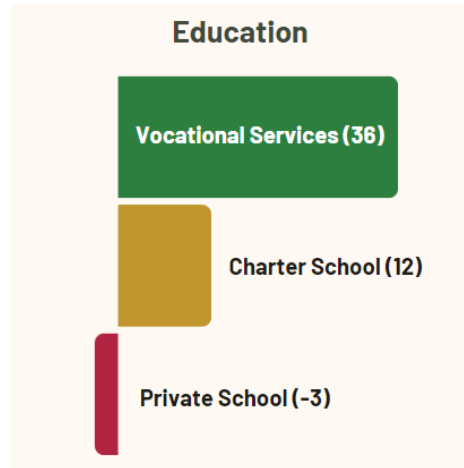


Figure 6

3c – Employment

Of the various options presented in the Employment category, community members were most supportive of the Artist Makerspace (Figure 7). With further conversation and clarification of what a makerspace is (Deputy County Manager Johnson provided the VAPA Center as an example), residents were even more enthusiastic of the idea and added that services for both artists and spectators should be low-cost or free.

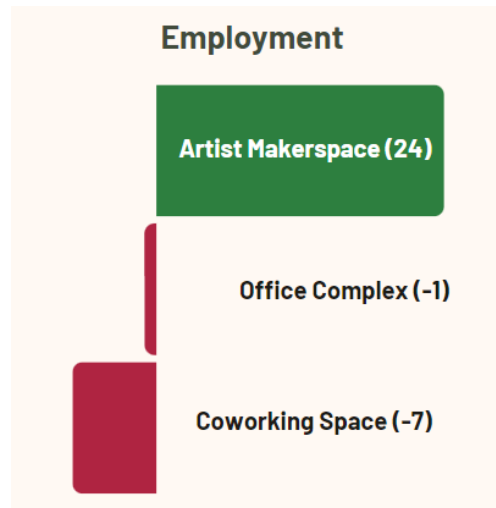


Figure 7

3d – Health & Wellness

Survey respondents were strongly supportive of health and wellness uses, including mental health, fitness, and medical offices (Figure 8).

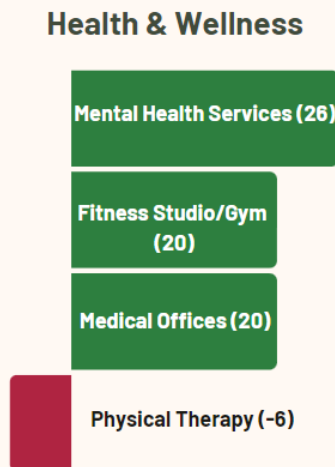


Figure 8

3e – Housing

Conversation at the April meeting revealed that much of the concern from residents and survey respondents related to housing (Figure 9) revolved around the potential for increased traffic as well as crime. Meeting attendees expressed interest in a potential partnership with the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to investigate microtransit as a solution.

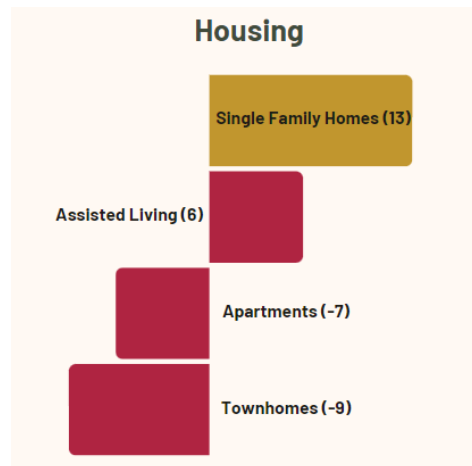


Figure 9

3f – Retail

Most residents and survey respondents were not opposed to retail (Figure 10); however, in the words of one resident, "We want it upscale if we have it." A town councilman described his experience growing up near the Black Wall Street district of Tulsa, Oklahoma to support the case

for quality, black-owned retail in Pottstown. As with housing, some residents also expressed concerns related to noise and traffic.



Figure 10

Conclusion

Pottstown residents are fiercely devoted to their community and overwhelmingly supportive of any potential adaptive reuse that helps to tell the story of its past. This includes Archival Space, Community Event Space, and Artist Makerspace or Performance Venues. However, balancing this interest in Pottstown’s rich past is an understanding of the necessity for economic development for the small neighborhood’s viability. Residents and survey respondents strongly support bringing money into the community through high quality retail establishments, health and wellness services, and vocational education. However, these investments should be made with careful consideration of their impact on housing costs, traffic and crime.

